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Human Immortality. By WILLIAM JAMES, Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University and Ingersoll Lecturer for 1898. Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1898.—pp. 70.

This is the well-known address which Professor James delivered as the first lecture on the Ingersoll foundation. His purpose was, not to set forth the positive grounds upon which a belief in human immortality may be founded, but to clear the way for constructive teaching by removing "two supposed objections to the doctrine."

The first of these difficulties relates to the psycho-physiological contention that, if our inner life is a function of the brain, it is impossible for the function to persist after its organ has undergone decay. Adopting, at least for argumentative purposes, the general formula that *thought is a function of the brain*, Professor James endeavors to show that the 'fatal consequence' of disbelieving in immortality is not logically coercive, by pointing out that it rests upon the unwarranted presupposition that there is only one kind of function, namely, the *productive* function. But "we are entitled also to consider permissive or transmissive function," which not only is in itself just as scientifically credible as the more popular theory of production, but also possesses "certain positive superiorities," since it is in greater harmony with idealistic philosophy, in closer touch with the psychological conception of a 'threshold,' and can more easily explain that whole class of experiences which is the object of investigation by the 'psychical researchers.' Inasmuch then as the theory of transmission is a "palpable alternative," "the fangs of cerebralistic materialism are drawn," and a conception of reality may be derived in accordance with which "the genuine matter of reality, the life of souls as it is in its fullness, will break through our several brains into this world in all sorts of restricted forms, and with all the imperfections and queernesses that characterize our finite individualities here below." The conception strikes one as essentially Neo-Platonic, and one cannot help doubting its consistency with Professor James's well-known theory of pluralism. An appended *note* (pp. 50 ff.), however, seems to anticipate and guard against any such criticism.

The second objection, relating to the "incredible and intolerable number of beings which, with our modern imagination, we must believe to be immortal, if immortality be true," seems hardly to be on a level with the former objection, and, as might be expected, Professor James finds but little trouble in removing such a stumbling-block. It is somewhat perplexing to understand, however, how this difficulty should have any force, at least in "scientifically cultivated circles," to rob the notion of immortality "of its old power to draw belief." The former objection has, doubtless, been a real one, which "many a writer's pages logically presuppose and involve" and Professor James's answer is certainly an extremely forcible and thoroughly adequate reply.

The copious notes, appended to the lecture in this handsome little volume, are very helpful and greatly increase the instructive value of the

work. The whole lecture is written in Professor James's perfectly inimitable, but nevertheless much imitated style.

ALBERT LEFEVRE.

Seelenmacht: Abriss einer zeitgemässen Weltanschauung. Von WINCENTY LUTOSLAWSKI. Leipzig, W. Engelmann, 1899.—pp. xvi, 301.

This book is a popular exposition of extreme individualism. It was originally written in English, we learn from the preface, but it proved too extreme for the English publishers, and was therefore translated into German with modifications. The modifications must have been considerable, for the work contains nothing terrifying in its present form. While it is often unorthodox and sometimes visionary, it has a moral tone that is elevated and sincere. The basis of M. Lutoslawski's philosophy is of course the substantiality of the individual soul, which assures its endless existence both before and after the present life. Against materialism it is urged that all evidence of the connection between mind and brain proves only that without a brain mind cannot produce movement, not that mind cannot exist without a brain. Telepathy is adduced as the most conclusive proof of the existence of other souls. There is, the author holds, an infinite gradation of these other souls from the lowest, which are the realities behind inanimate nature, up to the Supreme Being, man occupying an intermediate position. Freedom and immortality are held to be the portion of all; and the irregularities of nature are dwelt on as proving the freedom of the lowest monads, a freedom that even Deity respects. Souls above man in the scale of being are continually influencing his life, and the writer maintains that belief in this kind of supervision is essential for the best conduct of life.

In the chapter on "Development of Souls," there is much valuable suggestion on the subject of education. It is curious to see the author's self-consciousness cropping out in the long digressions on the importance of language study. M. Lutoslawski is master, it appears, of at least five languages; while his patriotism betrays itself in his hints that the Poles may yet become the leaders of human development.

The last chapters are devoted to an exposition of the author's political theories. He does not carry his individualism to the length of anarchy. His ideal form of government is rather a representative system that allows the fullest rights to the minority, that is, one where elections to be valid must be practically unanimous. Finally, M. Lutoslawski sketches for us the Utopia of the future. All that is necessary to make it actual, he tells us, is enlightenment. Men need only to be fully convinced of three great truths; the immortality of the soul, the supervision of higher beings over human life, and the brotherhood of mankind. Against an optimism of this sort, one can always urge the improbability that the profound egoism rooted in the nature of will can never be eradicated by any process whose aim is to convince the intellect.

MARGARET FLOY WASHBURN.